

FOREST-WIDE OBJECTIVES

Objectives identify the strategy we plan to use to move the Forest toward the desired conditions. They represent the quantity of actions we expect to take within defined timeframes. These objectives are strongly influenced by recent trends, past experiences, current staffing levels, and anticipated near-term budgets. They express what we believe can realistically be achieved over the planning period for this Plan. Some of the following proposed objectives have been quantified, others are shown without specific number to identify the type of objective we would like, but ones that need additional input and analysis to define.

Objectives for Watershed

To enhance and maintain healthy watershed conditions, 200 to 400 acres per decade are restored.

To provide appropriate instream habitat, aquatic organism passage, water quality, riparian habitat, or healthy biological communities for desired aquatic species, 200-300 miles of streams per decade are restored, sustained or enhanced.

To provide appropriate lake habitat, aquatic organism passage, water quality, riparian habitat, or healthy biological communities for desired aquatic species, 100-200 acres of lakes per decade are restored, sustained or enhanced.

To maintain habitat diversity for aquatic and riparian-dependent species, streambanks are managed in a manner that restores and maintains sufficient amounts of Large Woody Debris (approximately 200 pieces per stream mile)

Watersheds are managed in a manner that results in sedimentation rates that stabilize or improve the biological condition category of the stream as monitored using aquatic macroinvertebrates.

Objectives for Ecological Systems Diversity

Central and Southern Appalachian Spruce-Fir Forest - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

The current acreage of approximately 500 acres of red spruce is maintained or expanded. Areas in Laurel Fork where Norway spruce and red pine were planted, should be returned to red spruce.

Appalachian (Hemlock)- Northern Hardwood Forest - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

Regeneration of up to 5 percent of the area that is suitable for timber production.

Southern and Central Appalachian Cove Forest - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

Approximately xx acres in the 0-10 -year age class from regeneration harvest and approximately xx acres are in mature forest

Oak Forests and Woodlands - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

Approximately xx acres of previously closed canopy stands are in open canopy condition to maintain forest health and sustain foraging and nesting opportunities for species;

Approximately xx acres of forest are in the 0- to 10-year age class, and approximately xx acres are in mature forest condition (>60 years);

An estimated xx acres of this fire-dependent ecosystem have received a fire return interval of 5-15 years.

Approximately x% of the open canopy and regeneration occurred at elevations greater than 3,000 feet.

Pine Forest and Woodlands - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

Approximately xx acres of previously closed canopy stands are in open canopy condition to maintain forest health and sustain foraging and nesting opportunities for species;

Approximately xx acres of forest are in the 0- to 10-year age class, and approximately xx acres are in mature forest condition (>60 years);

An estimated xx acres of this fire-dependent ecosystem have received a fire return interval of 5-15 years.

Approximately x% of the open canopy and regeneration occurred at elevations greater than 3,000 feet.

Mafic Glade and Barrens and Alkaline Glade and Woodland - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

An estimated xx acres (current level) of Central Appalachian Alkaline Glade and Woodland and xx acres (current level) of Mafic Glade and Barrens on NFS lands continue to be present as these systems;

XX % of these systems are at their desired conditions in regard to fire regime, non-native invasive species control, open structure and lack of recreation impacts.

Appalachian Shale Barrens - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

An estimated xx acres (current level) of Shale Barrens on NFS lands continue to be present as Shale Barrens;

XX % of these systems are at their desired conditions in regard to fire regime, non-native invasive species control, open structure and lack of recreation impacts.

North-Central Appalachian Circumneutral Cliff and Talus and North-Central Appalachian Acidic Cliff and Talus

An estimated xx acres (current level) of cliff and talus systems on NFS lands continue to be present as Cliff and Talus;

XX % of these systems are at their desired conditions in regard to fire regime, non-native invasive species control, open structure and lack of recreation impacts.

Floodplain, Wetland and Riparian - At the end of the first decade of the Plan:

All of the existing wetland systems remain as wetlands and some systems have increased in extent due to beaver activity

Caves and Karstlands

Human impacts on caves are not adversely affected the hydrology or biology of any caves.

To create early-successional forest habitat, prepare timber sales for 1,000 to 1,800 acres annually.

To increase or maintain structural diversity in mid to late successional Dry-Mesic Oak Forest, Montane Oak Forest, Dry Oak-Pine Forest, Montane Pine Forest and Woodland and Pine-Oak Rocky Woodland, 12,000 to 20,000 acres of prescribed burning annually are implemented.

Objectives for Species Diversity

To restore the ecological health of the forest, 1 to 4 American chestnut restoration projects per district are developed in partnership with the American Chestnut Cooperators Foundation over the planning period.

Maintain and restore approximately xxx acres of early successional woody habitat at a range of elevations

Maintain and restore approximately xx acres of early successional grassland/shrubland open woodland habitat at a range of elevations

Develop strategies for management of 3-5 individual Special Biological Areas annually.

In watersheds with populations of wood turtles: 1) Maintain or create openings in riparian areas for turtle foraging and thermoregulation. 2) Manage and protect known existing nest sites. 3) Create additional suitable nest sites where appropriate. 4) Maintain or create instream woody debris. 5) Minimize sediment, pollutant, and pesticide loading to stream channels. 6) Avoid channelizing streams, impounding streams, and stabilizing streambanks with over-hanging vegetation. 7) Allow beaver activities that create suitable habitat. 8) Human interactions, such as motorized vehicle use and recreation, are managed to minimize impacts to wood turtles.

Maintain stable and/or increasing population trends for all Management Indicator Species

Objectives for Old Growth

Old Growth Forest Type Groups*	Acres (Ten years into Plan Implementation)
01 - Northern Hardwood Forests	2501
2a-Hemlock-North. Hardwd Subgroup	2387
2b-Wh. Pine-North. Hardwd Subgroup	545
2c-Spruce-North. Hardwd Subgroup	239
05 - Mixed Mesophytic Forests	6864
21 - Dry-mesic Oak Forests	189,000 - 191,000
22 - Dry and Xeric Oak Woodlands	422
24 - Xeric pine & Pine-oak Forests	96,792
25 - Dry & Dry-mesic Oak-pine Forests	27,000 - 28,437
28 - Eastern Riverfront Forests	6
TOTAL ACRES	325,756 - 329,193

Objectives for Native and Non-native Invasive Species

Survey 1,000 - 2,000 acres for non-native invasive plants annually

Treat high priority non-native invasive plants on 500-1,500 acres annually

Objectives for Recreation

About 158,000 - 198,000 acres of Semi-Primitive Non- Motorized (SPNM), 211,000 - 259,000 acres of Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM), and 650,000 - 660,000 acres of Roaded Natural (RN) recreational opportunities are maintained.

For the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, an Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services between the Pedlar Ranger District and partner Appalachian Trail Club is maintained annually.

Maintain approximately 1,000 to 1,200 miles of non-motorized trails.

Objectives for Scenery

Manage the George Washington National Forest with the following Scenic Integrity Objectives (acres are approximate): Very High xx acres, High xx acres, Moderate xx acres, and Low xx acres.

Objectives for Roads, Access and Facilities

Keep the current miles of open roads on the forest (no net increase).

Over the next 10 years, 5 to 10 miles of roads (classified and unauthorized) are decommissioned.

Objectives for Land and Special Uses

About xxx miles of boundary lines are to be surveyed and marked to Forest Service standard, and about xxx miles are maintained on an annual basis.

Objectives for Timber Management

Provide a total Timber Sale Program of 2.6 to 4.2 million cubic feet (MMCF)

Objectives for Rangeland Resources

The existing three grazing allotment plans are revised over the next 10 years.